

Message Text

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12

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-07 NSC-10 SPC-03 SS-20 RSC-01 H-03

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 SCI-06 EB-11 COME-00 TRSE-00

OMB-01 FEA-02 INT-08 DODE-00 DRC-01 /098 W

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R 170630Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2358

INFO ANCONSUL MELBOURNE 2004

AMCONSUL SYDNEY

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

AEC WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 0317

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: TECH, ENRG, MARR, PINS, AS

SUBJ: CODEL HOSMER -- SUMMARY RESULTS OF VISIT TO
AUSTRALIA

REF: (A) SYDNEY 0082; (B) SYDNEY 0093; (C) CANBERRA
0174; (D) CANBERRA 0175; (E) CANBERRA 0178

1. CONGRESSMAN WORKED HARD ON THREE APPARENT OBJECTIVES
IN MEETINGS WITH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, PRIVATE FIRMS,
AND PRESS:

A. TO DETERMINE GOA ATOMIC ENERGY POLICY, IN PARTICULAR
RE FUEL;

B. TO URGE GOA TO PLACE ITS URANIUM ON WORLD
MARKET AND NOT HOLD BACK IN HOPE OF HIGHER PRICES;

C. TO DETER GOA AND AUSTRALIANS GENERALLY FROM ENTERING
URANIUM ENRICHMENT BUSINESS.

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2. MINISTER FOR MINERALS AND ENERGY TOLD HOSMER HE

INTENDS TO POSTPONE EXPORT OF AUSTRALIAN URANIUM UNTIL WORLD PRICES MOUNT, THEN TO EXPORT IN ENRICHED FORM. ASIDE FROM MINISTER'S STRONG PERSONAL POSITION, HOSMER FOUND THAT NO GOVERNMENT ATOMIC ENERGY POLICY EXISTS AND AUSTRALIAN OFFICIALS GENERALLY LACK SOPHISTICATION IN FIELD.

3. ALTHOUGH REPRESENTATIVE OF MAJOR AUSTRALIAN INDUSTRIAL GROUP BHP TOLD HOSMER BHP HAD ASSEMBLED FINANCING, HAD SELECTED PROSPECTIVE SITES, AND HAD HAD PLANS COMPLETED BY BECHTEL FOR GASEOUS DIFFUSION PLANT (SYDNEY 0082), WE BELIEVE THIS STORY WAS MUCH EXAGGERATED AND THAT BHP REMAINS IN EARLIEST STAGES OF TENTATIVE CONSIDERATION. BECHTEL GENERAL MANAGER HAS INFORMED US THAT BECHTEL HAS DONE NO REPEAT NO WORK FOR BHP IN THIS FIELD AND HE IS CERTAIN NO SUCH WORK HAS BEEN DONE BY OTHERS IN AUSTRALIA. NEITHER PRIVATE INDUSTRY NOR GOA ITSELF IS ANYWHERE NEAR TO BUILDING AN ENRICHMENT PLANT.

4. HOSMER PRESS CONFERENCE BACKFIRED. ALL MAJOR NEWSPAPERS IGNORED HIS CAREFUL PRESENTATION ON WORLD URANIUM AND ENRICHMENT REQUIREMENTS AS RELATED TO AUSTRALIAN INTERESTS, AND DEVOTED CRITICAL, SIMPLISTIC STORIES TO HIS OFF-HAND REMARK THAT AUSTRALIA MIGHT BE GOOD PLACE FOR RADIOACTIVE WASTE DISPOSAL.

5. HOSMER HAD USEFUL MEETING WITH ADOD OFFICIALS TO URGE AFFIRMATIVE DECISION ON NUCLEAR POWERED WARSHIP VISIT TO AUSTRALIAN PORTS.

6. COMMENT: HOSMER IMPRESSED RANGE OF INFLUENTIAL AUSTRALIANS BY HIS DETAILED KNOWLEDGE OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND HIS PRAGMATIC, SERIOUS APPROACH. WE ARE HOPEFUL THAT HE MADE SOME LASTING IMPACT WITH HIS ARGUMENTS ABOUT URANIUM MARKET AND THE INADVISABILITY OF AUSTRALIAN INVESTMENT IN ENRICHMENT FACILITY, DESPITE MINISTER CONNOR'S APPARENT FIRM POSITION. ASIDE FROM UNFORTUNATE PRESS CONFERENCE, HE DISPLAYED POLITICAL SKILL THROUGHOUT VISIT AND WAS A DISTINCT ASSET AS US VIP VISITOR. IT WAS NOT ALWAYS CLEAR THAT CONGRESSMAN HOSMER REPRESENTED ONLY

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HIMSELF AND NOT JCAE, LET ALONE USG. EMBASSY AND CONGEN SYDNEY WILL ENDEAVOR TACTFULLY TO SET THIS STRAIGHT. HARROP

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
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Disposition Remarks:
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Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
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Errors: N/A
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